



More sparsely populated in the early 1890's, LaCamas was still tagged as "the fastest growing town in Washington state" when this picture was taken. The old Methodist church is visible at the far upper left; Left to right in the foreground are the tracks of the Camas and Tacoma Railroad and Transportation company, a line that got no nearer Tacoma than Lackamas lake. The lane in the middle of the picture now corresponds to Birch street in downtown Camas. Among the buildings on the east side of the street are Charles Farrell's first store, the Mountain House hotel and among the trees in the rear a livery barn. Adams street now runs to the left of the next group of the buildings to the right, all of which are standing on what is now part of the Crown Zellerbach mill site. The present mill office now stands on the open land between the groups of structures. The three story white building at the right is the old LaCamas flour mill, then one of the city's largest industries. The town spring was located just to the east of the flour mill. The paper mill of the day is seen at extreme right. Rebuilt after the fire of 1886, it was more modern and better equipped than ever. Notice the straw stacked in the yard for use in papermaking.

Explorers Dispatched By President Jefferson

Lewis And Clark Expedition Visits Camas, Washougal Area

The Lewis and Clark Expedition's visit to the Camas-Washougal area chronicled the start of an era in which a land previously inhabited by Indians became first a fur trapping area, then a forest products and agriculture area and finally a region of industrial diversity and international commerce. The future holds the promise of further expansion in industrialization and population.

The Expedition, dispatched by President Thomas Jefferson, first visited the area on November 3rd, 1805. While passing down the Columbia River on their way to the Pacific Ocean, Lewis and Clark gave the name "Seal River" to what is now the Washougal River because of the vast

number of seals in the River. The group of explorers found the Indians friendly and helpful, but had to keep close watch on their goods because of thievery.

On March 31, 1806, the expedition again visited the area on their return trip to what was then the United States. This time they stayed nearly a week, departing on April 6.

The Journals from March 31 explain: "Not being able to learn any Indian name, we call it Seal River (Washougal River), from the abundance of those animals near its mouth. At the same place we saw summer duck, or wood duck, as it is sometimes called; it is the same with those of the United States, and the first we had seen since entering the

Rocky Mountains last summer."

The purpose of the week-long stop was to gather stores for the expedition's

return across the mountains to the Missouri River, in Montana.

Hunting was not good on the North side of the River, but the men did find some success

on the south side.

"All of the tribes in the

neighbourhood of Wappato chiefly remarked by a passion Multnomahs; not because they are in any degree subordinate to that nation; but they all to obtain one, without regard seem to regard the arrangement. The women Multnomahs as the most also wear the short robe, but powerful. There is no their hair is most commonly distinguished chief, except the braided into two tresses falling at the head of the over each ear in front of the Multnomahs, and they are body, and instead of the tissue moreover linked by a similarity of bark, they employ a piece of dress and manners, and leather in the shape of a pocket

handkerchief tied around the loins. The last is the only and ineffectual defense when the warmth of the weather induces them to throw aside the robe."

"Like the natives of the seacoast they are also very fond of cold, hot and vapour baths, which are used at all seasons, and for the purpose of health

as well as pleasure. They, however, add a species of bath

peculiar to themselves, by washing the whole body with urine every morning."

While the hunters ranged

through the region collecting

supplies, Clark made several side trips, discovering the Willamette river, which he named the Multnomah.

On Sunday, April 6, the Expedition set out along the north side of the river.

Other explorers followed the trails blazed for them by these first comers, and historians generally credit three young men from John Jacob

Astor's fur trading post, established in 1811 at the mouth of the Columbia River, with naming Washougal. Alexander Ross set down on paper the experience of a three day trip from Astoria to the Cascades and relates staying for the night at "Washougal Camp."

For traders, map makers

and adventurers plied the river

in increasing numbers in the coming years. David Thompson

passed by on a map making

expedition and recorded local

landmarks, and Alexander

Henry of the Northwest

Company, a fur trade

competitor of the Hudson's

Bay Company, looked over Mt.

Pleasant as a possible site for a

trading post in 1814.

Wilson Price Hunt had

drifted down river in 1811,

following the trail of Lewis and

Clark.

Others including Captain